

Spirit Philosophy

In Discourses Delivered to
The Scientific Seance Circle



Spirit Philosophy

Of Robert G. Ingersoll and
Rev. Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Together With

POST-MORTEM REVERIES of JACK CARPENTER

COMPILED FROM THE RECORD OF
The Scientific Seance Circle

PRICE 25 CENTS

BOOK ONE

Compiled and Published by
ROBERT C. KROLL

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PREFACE

AS MANY PERSONS approach the subject of Spirit Communication with a feeling of prejudice, it is necessary to explain that this booklet is not an effort to do proselyting in the interest of any cult or "ism." These Spirit Discourses are presented as evidence touching the survival of personal identity. Since the supernatural can never be proven by living witnesses, it follows that this booklet is not a study of Supernaturalism but an effort to contribute something to the sum of human knowledge by means of phenomena produced in conformity to natural laws as yet little understood.

If personal identity survives physical dissolution, then immortality must be a fact in nature. It remains only for us to establish this fact to our own satisfaction. This being the case, the opinions, religions, and prejudices of men cannot take from any man his birthright to immortality—hence, these factors cannot be permitted to enter into a work of this kind.

IF THE INDIVIDUAL MIND survives physical death, only that mind can prove such survival—and faith has long failed to satisfy the demand for this proof. Furthermore, if the great thinkers of the past still live, they must also continue to think; and, if they can prove that they live they should be able, by the same means, to

transmit their present thoughts for the benefit of mankind. It is only a question of opening up an avenue through which they can manifest on the physical plane according to natural law. Leading thinkers in all parts of the world have announced that it is an accomplished fact—and these announcements have been made as the conclusions arrived at after years of painstaking study and experience.

To provide the conditions under which such natural manifestations are possible, is the one purpose to which the Scientific Seance Circle is devoted. This Circle is constituted of eight investigators who have given years of study to the various aspects of psychic phenomena. This Scientific Seance Circle, for the past three years, has been holding regular sessions in my home under test conditions. The medium is Mr. Otto E. Laroge, a photographer by profession, and I act as amanuensis for the Circle. The regular organization forms a psychic battery which provides the forces necessary for spirit manifestation in the seance room. The discourses are given by the audible voice of the Spirit Speakers (known as trumpet speaking, or direct voice) in the hearing of all those present and every word is written down at the time exactly as spoken.

A PSYCHIC ORGANIZATION, of course, requires the co-operation of interested persons on the Spirit side to enable our unseen visitors to manifest in a seance. It is not my

present purpose to mention the immortals who have interested themselves in the work of the Scientific Seance Circle. Suffice it to say, they include Spirit Technologists who organize the unseen forces and make them available to Spirits desiring to manifest. Then, the evening's program is always arranged on the Spirit side (the members of the Circle never know in advance who the Speakers will be) by one who is known as the Spirit Control. Our control is Jack Carpenter, who in *Earth-Life* was a comedian and traveled with the leading shows of a half-century ago. Our Record is replete with his wit; but, as it is not intended to make this booklet a humorous one, I introduce Jack Carpenter to the reader by giving his "Post-Mortem Reveries." While no literary excellence is claimed for these verses, they serve the present purpose insofar as they show a diversity of thought and have the merit of being something different.

At this writing the Record of the Scientific Seance Circle contains over two hundred discourses delivered by nearly one hundred and fifty Spirit Speakers. This booklet contains but two of these. They are selected because they come from men who worked in entirely different fields of thought. Besides, the acknowledged works of ROBERT G. INGERSOLL and the REV. CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON are extant and comparison of these can be made with their posthumous discourses. Besides a critical

analysis of the mental quality shown, a comparison of context, style, and other elements must prove the analogy which alone can convince the reader of the source of these thoughts and establish the identity of the Spirit Speakers herein quoted. If this proof of identity can be established to the satisfaction of the reader—no matter how much the context might jar his prejudices—the question of personal survival of identity after death becomes a settled fact and is thus removed from the uncertain realm of faith.

THERE IS NOTHING MYSTERIOUS about these discourses. The work of the Scientific Seance Circle has been witnessed by more than two hundred persons from various walks of life whose names are of record and live today to verify the statements about the manner in which these discourses are received and recorded. None of the members of the Scientific Seance Circle have any professional interest in this kind of work—they are all animated by the single purpose of gaining access to that great fountain of information which lies just beyond in realms unseen. It should be distinctly understood that the work of the Scientific Seance Circle does not constitute an apology or defense of imposture or charlatanism. All that is asked is fair consideration of the evidence presented and that it be weighed without fear or prejudice.

Men who refuse to recognize a fact do not change that fact. If we accept as true the things

that cannot be true, we expose ourselves to merited criticism. Evidence that might throw a gleam of light across the pathway of two eternities must also light our own way as we pass down through the valley of time.

THE SCIENTIFIC SEANCE CIRCLE is opening up an avenue through which the exalted immortals of all time are giving their present thoughts to the people of our own time here and now. It means more light for the world and intellectual freedom for man. The range of thought covered in our Record is almost infinite. Among the subjects treated, there is wholesome philosophy for persons in all walks of life; there are intimate discussions of national and international questions by noted public men; there are pages of history not to be found in any of the world's great libraries; there are examples of languages that ceased to be used before our present civilization was born; there is light on subjects and problems that have long baffled scientists and historians; and, all of this great wealth of rare material will be made available to the public in other publications which are to follow this booklet. Of course, the reader will want to keep in touch with this work and receive the full benefit of future issues.

ROBERT C. KROLL,
4146 Shaw Avenue,
Saint Louis, Mo.

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL

Continues Attacks on Superstition—Amused at Mental Caliber of Clergy—Found Himself in Spirit Facing Eternity—Told the Facts—History All but Blotted Out by the Church—Present Work One of Reconstruction—Will Restore World's Scientific History—A Lesson from the Flowers—Pays Tribute to Childhood—Present Opinion on Life Beyond the Grave—Missed Only Chance to Get a Touch of Hell—Reason and Confidence a Slow Growing Plant—Not All of Life to Live Nor All of Death to Die—Death Does Not End All—Victorious Peace After Death—Incredulity of Science and Bigotry of Ignorance—The Gods Have Quit Causing Famines—Imposture Has Always Worn a Crown—God Improves as Man Advances—The Greatest Baptism—Religion Supports Nobody—Dishonest Practices Condoned—Tax the Churches.

(A series of Spirit Discourses delivered to the Scientific Seance Circle at sessions held between August 21, 1916, and February 13, 1919)

“GOOD EVENING, kind friends, I am Robert G. Ingersoll. My whole life was devoted to the single purpose of freeing the people from the superstitions which the church regarded as holy. Superstition is the father of lies and the mother of deceit, it lives in vain hope and dies in despair.”

Then we asked Col. Ingersoll whether it gave

him any pleasure to speak to the Scientific Seance Circle about his life-work. He answered us, saying:

"It gives me more pleasure than Adam and Eve had in the Garden of Eden.

"I am still amused at the small mental caliber of the clergy. They cling to that easy form of arithmetic which denies the simple tables every child learns at school. They insist that one and one and one make one. I could never figure it out myself, but anyone with a theological training understands how perfectly simple it is to work additions to get that inspired result. By exposing this nonsense from the platform, the priests will eventually run out of their biblical inspiration and discover that 2 and 2 makes 4.

"My friends, the church is wrong, and honor is purer than gold. Never sacrifice a fact for a belief. You will wreck superstition by telling people the truth, but stand up for what you know. Every time you expose a lie and tell the truth, people will say, 'He knows what he's talking about.'"
(August 21, 1916).

* * *

THE NEW BIRTH

"**E**VEN while yet in Earth-Life, I sometimes thought what a wonderful universe this is. When I contemplated the depth of nature's mysteries and tried to think of that infinite sea which you call endless space, I thought how unequal I

was to the task and I wished I had never existed. When I passed through the change of physical death, I found myself in spirit facing eternity and I asked, 'must I like forever and ever, is this the new birth?' * * * * My questions were soon answered and I resolved that I must live for the benefit of those on Earth. * * * * I lived by the standard I am giving you now. I told the facts, the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. My observations on the Mistakes of Moses are still the truth. * * * * The world is full of skeptics, liars, and truth. As a matter of fact, there is really no difference between the things that were said by Paine, Voltaire, and myself. The difference was only in the manner that each delivered the same message. (September 25, 1916).

* * *

THE WORLD'S SCIENTIFIC HISTORY

“**W**HERE are the ancient manuscripts that told the history of the people when the race was young? These priceless treasures have been destroyed by ignorant priests. History has been all but blotted out by the church. The world has nothing left but the history of ignorance clothed in superstition. Our work is one of reconstruction. We are going to restore the truth by restoring the world's scientific history.” (October 23, 1916).

ON BEING DISCOURAGED

“NEVER let discouragement stand in your way. It is good to feel that way sometimes.

“If this old world had never felt like that, it would not be round. It got discouraged about being flat and began to spread and roll. So the world is rolling on and on, and the more it rolls the happier it gets. And the ground in its bosom smiles at the progress it makes, and nourishes the flower that lives and smiles and gives its fragrance, like a spendthrift, to the winds that blow. Yet, there is intelligence in the blade of grass as in the fragrant flower. They salute the life-giving sunshine with a smile in the morning and recline in the shadows of the night, happy and confident that the sun will shine again tomorrow. They are not discouraged. Take this lesson from the flower and think how bright the sun will shine for you in the noonday of your success.” (October 30, 1916).

* * *

THE GRANDEST THING IN THE WORLD

“I HAVE SEEN many beautiful characters mature into greatness from innocent childhood. Great men come and great men go, but, I tell you, a child is the grandest thing the world ever produced. I loved children as I loved nothing else. They could never make enough noise for me.

“Childhood in its simplicity is perfect innocence, and its happy days are filled with joy. The rippling laughter of rosy-cheeked children spreads sunshine that rivals the light of the sun, it quickens hearts that are crushed with grief and softens to tenderness calloused lips that droop with the burden of care.” (November 13, 1916).

* * *

ON LIFE BEYOND THE GRAVE

“**Y**OU WANT TO KNOW my present opinion about life beyond the grave? Now I know that immortality is a fact. I never said it was not true. I often admitted that I knew nothing about it, and I insisted that the clergy did not know any more. Had I known then what I know now, I would have made their hair stand up.

“I often said that when I died I wanted to be cremated so I could get a touch of hell. I had no feeling then, however, and I missed my only chance. I will come back some other time and tell you more about cremation. Your preachers have one foot in hell all the time.” (February 19, 1917).

* * *

JUSTICE THE KEYNOTE OF THE UNIVERSE

“**J**USTICE is the keynote of the universe, all else is out of tune.

“Reason and confidence is a slow-growing plant which must be fertilized at the root. It

must be given attention and thought in youth, as we grow, so it can blossom and bloom in maturity and revel in the sunlight of life's Summer morn'.

"Well, it is a greater compliment to be trusted than it is to be loved.

"Those who live their first lives well shall live again. It is not all of life to live nor all of death to die. Birth and death are just as true in science as anywhere else under the sun. Death is the new birth of immortality." (March 5, 1917).

* * *

HAS NO PERSONAL GOD

"I WILL SEE the evolution of the spirit now and know where it can go. I can make the positive statement that death does not end all! I have been here in thought, expression, love, and sincerity, and I will always be with you. I have found many things that have been a revelation to me, but none of them call for apology on my part. I have no personal god." (October 1, 1917).

* * *

THE FRUITS OF A VICTORIOUS PEACE

"VERY FEW MEN win recognition that gives them a great name in their own time. They must bear the brunt of the battle while they live and enjoy the fruits of a victorious peace after they get over here. I need mention only a few names to prove my point: There is Thomas Paine, Voltaire, Herbert Spencer, the American Spurgeon, Henry Ward Beecher,

Abraham Lincoln, and others. These men had to die to live in the grateful memory of mankind." (November 12, 1917).

* * *

DEPLORES NARROW IDEAS OF LEARNED MEN

"I WAS DEEPLY INTERESTED in the wonderful message you just received from Serando. I thought how much more wonderful his message would have been if he had had my intelligence when he passed out of the body. Now, I never did flatter myself, but I knew a few things the preachers either did not know or would not admit. They called me a bad man, but they were bad in their own hearts. When I think of this ancient spirit who left the world in a savage state and returns to speak of the prehistoric ages of the world's growth, I cannot help but contrast his former and present states of intellectual development. Yes, mind grows by degrees and continues to expand as time goes on; but, after all, it's a slow progress. There is so much to learn.

"To think, when that man spoke to you of things that took place on this globe more than fifty million years ago! Among your scientific men, with all their boasted knowledge, you find those who laugh at their colleagues for speculating on the things that were probable as short a time as one million years ago. If you submit such a message as Serando's for their consideration, they will ridicule the whole thing. Now, if

that is the reception we get at the hands of the world's learned men when we present new pages in the world's unwritten history, what can you expect from the ignorant masses?" (November 19, 1917).

* * *

THE TRAFFIC IN SOULS

"I SEE THE PEOPLE are still offering up a line of worship or flattery in exchange for assistance—quite an easy bargain to drive with God!

"Slowly, painfully, but surely, the gods are being driven from the world. The gods have quit causing famine—it is now the coal trust, cold storage and other grafters.

"Now and then God is blamed for causing the death of a child because it is idolized by its parents. But since the kaiser has God with him, fear, mumps, measles, and pneumonia are natural causes in the army. Still, many people are afraid to save their body for fear they might lose their soul. Since the Selective Draft Law has exempted from military service the gentlemen of the soul-saving profession, they are able to continue their propaganda at a safe distance. Various religious organizations are sending Bibles to the men on the firing line offering up rewards in another world for obedience in this. It is like buying a soul on credit.

"In all ages the people have honored those who dishonored them. They have canonized the most

gigantic liars and have buried the great thieves in marble and gold. Under the loftiest monuments sleeps the dust of murder. Imposture has always worn a crown!

“Even today people are saying prayers for the success of the church, and hiring others to say prayers for them. The church member agrees to surrender his intellect, the church agrees to save his soul upon condition that he hand over his brain to bind the bargain.

“**R**ELIGION has not civilized man, man has civilized religion. God improves as man advances. The trouble is with these pious people, they shut up their reason when they open up their Bible.

“There is only one sin—Selfishness. There is only one good—Happiness. All law should be to preserve happiness and destroy selfishness.

“Now, happiness comes through the environment of living well. They build churches out of concrete, brick, stone, glass, steel and iron and adorn them with gold, stain the windows with the blood of Christ—and allow the people to die in huts and hovels. I think it is time that the church do a little real estate work and see that their congregations have better homes and better modes of living.

“What a grand dinner they could have on Thanksgiving Day if they would carve the turkey of Plenty with the knife of Justice and the fork of Reason, pass around the tender meat of

Freedom to all alike. Let them break the spoon of Superstition that they have been feeding the people with for centuries. Let them pass around the seasoned dressing of Right Thinking and Reading.

"When they start with such ideas, the thinking people will extend their hands in an effort to uplift and assist them instead of tear down. No institution can stand in the way of human progress and survive." (February 25, 1918).

* * *

ETHICS OF BUSINESS AND RELIGION

"**S**OAP BAPTISM is the greatest baptism I know. Don't pay hypocrites to do your thinking for you, it is a waste of time and money to hire priests to frighten children and dull their intellect. You need something grander, something with brains behind it, to advance. Don't go backward. You can't advance without thinking.

"The time has come when Liberty, Justice, Honor and Love must come to every man. There is no use to seek after a Creator. Heaven and Hell will take care of their own upheavals. You can expect hell in this world and the next so long as the evil of graft is allowed to sow the seed of crime. Honesty is the best policy.

"**R**ELIGION supports nobody, the people support it--and have done so for centuries. Religion can improve only as men grow

better. Your preachers have nothing to say about crooked politics, evil mayors and governors, and private money interests.

"The doctor writes his prescription, and you take it to the druggist to be filled. If he hasn't the right ingredients, he substitutes—no matter if the patient dies! If it is found out, it is declared to be a mistake, and he goes a free man, anyhow."

"The groceryman sells coffee out of the same sack at different prices to his daily customers, and cheating is done all the way down the line—and many of these cheats are members of some church, and the clergy know it, still they are afraid to expose them. In the face of these conditions, the clergy pretend to be following the teachings of Christ. Well, if Christ ever returned to the world and saw the graft practiced in his name, he would turn right back again.

"The church escapes taxation, still the people are taxed for many things in which they have no interest. Now, I say, tax church property—even the holy water! Your preachers can talk a great deal about prohibition, but they offer no amendment. Now, it is time for people to quit supporting such institutions and think for themselves. Good night. (February 13, 1919).

"ROBERT G. INGERSOLL."

Rev. Charles Haddon Spurgeon

A Discussion on the Subject of Prayer—Ideas Have Changed—The Desire for Prayer Analysed—Suggestive Influence of Related Ideas—When Prayer Becomes an Unconscious Habit—The Origin of Worship—When Science Gave Way to Superstition—Man-Created Gods—Mental as Well as Physical Traits Transmitted to Children—Inculcating Natural Instinct—How Prayer Is Beneficial—Fear the First Cousin of Superstition—Immorality the Result of Ignorance—The Dual Standard of Morality—Religion Offers Nothing but Theory—Different Kinds of Prayer—Highest Force Is Universal Mind—All Actual Phenomena Are Natural—Advantage of Audible Prayer—A Definition of Faith—Mental Force Must Be Directed with Confidence—Regenerating Influence of Art—The Work of Progression—That Which Lies Above and Beyond Constitutes Progress.

(A Spirit Discourse delivered to the Scientific Seance Circle at a session held October 16, 1916.)

“GOOD EVENING, friends, I am Charles Haddon Spurgeon. While you are discussing the subject of prayer, let us go into it a little deeper. My ideas on this subject have changed with time, and I will begin by telling you that they are different from what they used to be.

“It is absolutely true that many people experience such a strong natural desire for prayer that it amounts to a craving which seeks satisfaction with the same persistence as even the appetites. Many learned men have observed this desire to pray, and recognize the craving as a natural instinct in the normal human being. They take too much for granted and form conclusions before investigating all of the facts. Inevitably, the average student concludes that the instinct to pray, being so strong and natural, must of necessity be conclusive proof that the Creator has ordained this as a natural means of communication between himself and mankind. But, this is a conclusion based upon superficial evidence and does not consider all of the factors which contribute to implant the desire for prayer.

“When you feel like your inner self wants to pray, it is because some occurrence, some object or saying—being a related idea—acts as a suggestion which the mind unconsciously receives. Certain ideas run in families and, when awakened by such a suggestion as a related idea, the mind makes unconscious response and expresses itself in conscious desire. So, also, the form of prayer at definite times, and on fixed occasions, fixes the idea of prayer as an idea related to such occasions. Such prayer becomes an unconscious habit and the suggestion comes to consciousness as an impulse whenever any related idea is suggested by time, place, or occasion. Thus you will

see that prayer is really a consolation, a satisfaction, or even an ecstasy, to persons of religious training or anyone inheriting the idea of worship from ancestors who practiced religious forms.

* * *

“THE IDEA OF WORSHIP had its origin back in forgotten generations. When primitive men experienced enough mental growth to appreciate external phenomena, which they observed everywhere in nature, they began to search for explanations of the unknown. This inquiry stimulated the fancy which, in turn, became so real that the beliefs of fancy satisfied their desire for knowledge. Science gave way to superstition and the imagination created gods to preside over every desire and every passion they knew. They endowed their gods with all the characteristics of men, and glorified them by magnifying these powers. Soon these man-created gods were so powerful that men learned to fear them, and superstition has ever since been afraid of its own shadow. Thus superstition was enthroned and has since been born into successive generations until superstitious beliefs seemed to be generated spontaneously among men. To this extent it is, indeed, natural to pray. The child inherits this same desire to pray because mental as well as physical traits are transmitted from parents to children. Then, it is natural for a child to imitate the forms practiced by its parents and others. All of these influences,

multiplied through countless generations, fix the idea of prayer so strongly on the mind that the suggestion ultimately asserts itself with the persistence of instinct and becomes a ruling passion.

“**N**OW, I AM TRYING to make you understand that man is able to inculcate what you call natural instinct into unborn generations, and that the instinct to pray is in this class, and does not prove its divine origin any more than does the instinct to follow any other line of thought peculiar to some particular family, tribe, or race of people. For instance, whole races are instructed in the observance of certain forms and usages which become a fixed idea with the people. The habit of observance becomes born into the people for it seems unnatural for them to omit these forms and usages. Then, after the origin of these forms can no longer be traced, whole races find themselves doing peculiar things instinctively. But, it is no argument that it is right and divine to do them simply because the desire is natural and seems instinctive. So much for the naturalness and divinity of prayer.

“Yet, prayer does good if it is sincere and you are good. If you are bad, no matter how sincere you may be, your prayer cannot accomplish anything. Faith is believing without evidence. The persons who taught us to pray do not know, themselves, if it does any good. They simply have faith that it will. Fear is the first cousin of superstition. Instead of teaching our children fear,



we should teach them to know the right and the wrong from their first understanding.

“To make prayer more effective, character must be improved by the increase of knowledge. The time is not far off when science will demonstrate the necessity of teaching the youth subjects which are now suppressed. I look for the time when public schools will teach the children what parents are now afraid to teach. Most immorality results from ignorance of nature’s requirements and demands. A knowledge of nature’s inexorable laws of sequence, and of cause and effect, will strengthen the character of our youth. A realization that none can commit crime on credit and charge it to another will improve the morals of all mankind and correct the errors now accepted in the dual standard of morality. Religion offers nothing but theory—facts are the foundation of knowledge. Knowledge is that higher realization of being which we all must seek.

“**I** AM TRYING TO IMPART to you a knowledge of prayer to the end that you may use it effectively. When I speak of prayer, I do not limit myself to the spoken prayer; you can just as well pray silently. But, in either case, it is a mistake to suppose that prayer is ever answered by the interposition of Providence, or that we can secure a special dispensation from a capricious god by the persuasive power of prayer. By the act of prayer we produce mental force which is directed to secure the object of our

prayer. The power of mental force so directed is almost unlimited in its potentiality for good.

“The power of prayer can be made beneficially effective by employing it in natural channels because the highest force is Universal Mind. By directing our thoughts to the great center of Universal Mind, we dispose ourselves to let that force work in and through us, and secure for ourselves the blessings of this Universal Mind by multiplying its manifestations through us. All actual phenomena are natural, so is Life and all its realities. To experience more blessings in our own lives it is necessary to gain greater knowledge of nature’s demands and comply with them.

“**I** MUST INSIST, though, that in places where many people gather for a common purpose, audible prayer has a great advantage over silent prayer. Remember, I said that faith is believing without evidence. Now, there are many people who cannot do this. Again, the very lack of faith is often the only barrier that stands between many people and the realization of many good things for which they pray. Mental force must be directed with confidence to be effective, hence the necessity of faith when evidence and knowledge are lacking. People of little faith will readily join in a public prayer when led by some strong mind who concentrates and directs their thoughts by spoken words. In this manner the audible prayer becomes a hypnotic suggestion which acts on the weaker minds thus led to believe without evidence. Of course, you have suf-

ficient knowledge of the mental laws employed in this process to understand why a multitude being led in prayer can accomplish more good by the mental force being created in unison when all minds are focused upon a common purpose by an intelligent leader.

“In this way, prayer opens up a new avenue to people who fell by the wayside. But, I do not assert that prayer is the only means by which we can rescue the fallen. I know that music often touches hearts that are calloused to prayer. I have also observed the regenerating influence of art.

“Anything that makes people better must be good. You could not be perfect if you would. One-half of your time would be spent in trying while the other half would be dissipated resisting the efforts of those urging you not to make the effort. All these difficulties are past when you pass out of Earth-Life.

“**H**ERE WE ACQUIRE KNOWLEDGE in leaps and bounds. What we learn comes from Spirits far superior to ourselves. There is no guess about the accuracy of what they teach us. Yet, our teachers over here do not know everything. For instance, if I was interested in some character of history, and I ask some high Spirit here to tell me about him, he may tell me he never heard of the person about whom I inquire. Again, I am interested in some event in history or some obscure incident related in the

Bible and I ask these High Spirits for confirmatory information which I have sought. Even though I have long taken the truth of these narratives for granted, I am often told by these Spirits that they have no information on the subjects about which I inquire, and they sometimes tell me they will try to find out what I want to know. Our teachers do not speculate on the accuracy of the information they give us. They are positive about the things they do know and are non-committal about the uncertain and the unknown. They are also candid to tell us that they do not know, when we ask them concerning subjects about which their information is incomplete. Nothing seems complete, even here, and I find that knowledge is limited with all. Nor are all of the High Spirits engaged in the occupation of teaching. The work of progression in the Spirit World is a great work, and the Spirits are engaged in many different lines of effort.

“In conclusion, I leave you a word of advice concerning your mental growth and spiritual progress: Never stop growing, either mentally or spiritually; never be satisfied with the things that are old; always reach out for the things that are new—that which lies above and beyond constitutes progress. The time can never come when there is nothing more ahead! My advice to you, who are still in the flesh, is to keep your minds focused on progress. Your minds must be progressive or there will be no progress on this side.”

POST-MORTEM REVERIES OF JACK CARPENTER

Given through the trance mediumship of Mr.
D. L. Gray

Recorded by Robert C. Kroll

Note:—Jack Carpenter, the trumpet control of the Scientific Seance Circle, gave us occasional verses of what seemed to be a connected poem. When asked to give us a complete recitation at one time, he said he could not hold the forces long enough for such an effort by means of trumpet speaking. Acting on the suggestion of the Spirit control, we appointed December 15, 1916, for a special sitting with another medium, Mr. D. L. Gray. This young man was highly susceptible to trance control but knew nothing of the purpose for which we had invited him to our home.

On the evening stated, Mr. Gray came to the house alone and joined Mrs. Kroll and myself in a conversation as we sat around a table in a well-lighted room. In a little while, Mr. Gray went under control and recited the following poem, which I recorded verbatim.

—Robert C. Kroll.

“So that’s the way of trying to be straight and on
the level,

You will lose your reputation if you try;
If you say a word of kindness for some poor devil,
Then some boob will say, ‘You lie!’

“And if you try to square yourself with this boob
And tell him that you didn’t mean just what he
thought,
He’ll turn his nose up and won’t listen,
But he’ll tell the folks around that you’ve been
bought.

“So it’s best to play the wise owl
And listen to their rot;
And, if they ask you what you heard,
Just tell them you forgot.

“If they insist on telling
Their troubles all to you,
Just roll your eyes, like an old owl,
And when they’re done, say ‘Hoo!’

“Don’t believe anything you hear,
And only half of what you see;
And, if they ask you questions, say,
‘You can’t prove that by me.’

“But eventually, and all in time,
These questions will be asked;
That’s why I’m telling you in rhyme
My experience of the past.

“Now, when the ladies get inquisitive,
Want to know if they love their beau,
The answer that I give them is—
Now, wouldn’t you like to know?

“There are some things you ought to know,
So I’ll tell you in advance
I’m a Freethinker, like all of you,
A Spiritual Free Lance.

“Now, I’ve traveled east and I’ve traveled west,
A thousand miles or more,
But, I’ve never seen the caves of hell
Nor heaven’s pearly door.

“Now, I’ve traveled north and I’ve traveled
south,
And also through the air,
But, I never saw an angel’s wings
Or heaven’s golden stair.

“Now, when I say these things,
Some folks are going to worry;
They’ll burn some candles for their friends
To light their way through purgatory.

“Well, they burn candles in the church
To ward the devil away;
And, if that’s the case, it’s a mighty good place
For the candles all to stay.

“Yes, I looked for old Saint Peter
With his bunch of golden keys,
But I got stung as bad as anyone
That ever fooled with bees.

“Some say the future should not be told:

 If that is so, why do they tell
About future mansions of gold
 And that fiery complexioned hell?

“While there are some things that I’ve done
 wrong,

 I never paid the devil fees;
Still, to hear good Billy Sunday talk,
 He could show you all of these—
And, when he’s through, he’ll turn over to you
 Saint Peter’s golden keys.

“But Sunday, like the rest of them

 Is out collecting fees;
When you figure it out, they’re grafters,
 The whole darn cheese!

“You take it all in all,

 I’ve seriously been thinkin’
Why they let a guy live like Gypsy Smith,
 And kill a man like Lincoln.

“I’ve seen Barnum, the old show man,

 Who used to fool the people,
But he didn’t fool ’em half as bad
 As the preachers fool them in the chapel.

“When old Barnum fooled somebody,

 He knew that he was doing wrong;
But the preachers, who fool the multitudes,
 Are fooling themselves right along.

“Yet, they’re supposed to know these things;
And, you can hear the clergy sing:
‘O grave! where is thy victory?
O death! where is thy sting?’

“I’ll tell you this of things beyond,
Speaking of graves and death and stings,
The grave has no more victory
Than angels fly with feathered wings.

“As to the sting of death, I’m glad that I’ve been
stung;
If I now lived upon the earth,
And said just what I thought,
Perhaps I would be hung.

“Some people say that mediums, like dogs,
Are not fit for a public floor;
If they are any better themselves—
Well, what are they growling for?

“And when they say man has a soul,
They know not what they say;
Man has no soul, but is a soul
That dwells in a house of clay.

“How well do I remember when my body was
laid away,
And I couldn’t help from laughing when I
heard the Reverend say;

'He has gone to meet his Maker'—then I saw
my kinfolks sway—
And upon me came the dawning of a brighter
future day.

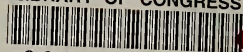
"Then I turned to seek adventure,
But my feet were frozen fast,
And before me came a vision—
Not of heaven, but my past!

"And, as I stood in waiting,
The scenes were changed for me;
And there serene—on that majestic screen—
Was the World as it ought to be.

"And I've ever since been trying
To exact its likeness here;
And, by so doing, rid the World
Of all its worry, doubt, and fear."



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